Toronto Baptist Seminary
& Bible College

A TRANSLATION AND NARRATIVE ANALYSIS OF GENESIS 37:13-24

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by

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TRANSLATION

13	
וַיֹּאמֶר יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶל־יוֹסֵף הֲלוֹא אַחֶיךָ רֹעִים בִּשְׁכֶם לְכָה וְאֶשְׁלָחֲךָ אֲלֵיהֶם וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ הִנֵּנִי׃	
And Israel said to Joseph, “Are not your brothers pasturing (the flock) in Shechem? Go, And I will send you to them.” And he said to him, “Here I am.”	
וַיֹּאמֶר (אָמַר)	Qal imperfect WC 3ms To say
הֲלוֹא (לֹא)	Interrogative particle + Negation
אַחֶיךָ (אָח)	Noun mp Construct + 2ms PS Your brothers
רֹעִים (רָעָה)	Qal Ptc mp To pasture the flock
לְכָה (הָלַךְ)	Qal imperative 2ms To go
וְאֶשְׁלָחֲךָ (שָׁלַח)	Qal imperfect WC 1cs + 2ms PS To send
וַיֹּאמֶר (אָמַר)	Qal imperfect WC 3ms To say
הִנֵּנִי (הִנֵּה)	Demonstrative particle + 1cs PS Here I am/Behold me

14
וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ לֶךְ־נָא רְאֵה אֶת־שְׁלוֹם אַחֶיךָ וְאֶת־שְׁלוֹם הַצֹּאן וַהֲשִׁבֵנִי דָּבָר וַיִּשְׁלָחֵהוּ מֵעֵמֶק חֶבְרוֹן וַיָּבֹא שְׁכֶמָה׃
Then he said to him, “Please go see to the welfare of your brothers and the welfare of the flock. Return the word to me.” *So* He sent him from the valley of Hebron. And he came to Shechem.

וַיֹּאמֶר (אָמַר)	Qal imperfect WC 3ms To say
לֶךְ (הָלַךְ)	Qal imperative 2ms To go
רְאֵה (רָאָה)	Qal imperative 2ms To see
שְׁלוֹם (שָׁלוֹם)	Noun ms Construct *Welfare/peach*
וַהֲשִׁבֵנִי (שׁוּב)	Hiphil imperfect (jussive) 2ms + 1cs PS Hiphil: causative, הַ prefix Interrogative particle + Verb + 1cs PS To return
וַיִּשְׁלָחֵהוּ (שָׁלַח)	Qal imperfect WC 3ms + 3ms PS To send
מֵעֵמֶק (עֵמֶק)	Noun ms Construct *Valley*
וַיָּבֹא (בּוֹא)	Qal imperfect WC 3ms To come/enter

15	
וַיִּמְצָאֵהוּ אִישׁ וְהִנֵּה תֹּעֶה בַּשָּׂדֶה וַיִּשְׁאָלֵהוּ הָאִישׁ לֵאמֹר מַה־תְּבַקֵּשׁ׃	
And a man found him And beheld him wandering in the field And the man asked him and he said, “What are you seeking?”	
וַיִּמְצָאֵהוּ (מָצָא)	Qal imperfect WC 3ms + 3ms PS To find
תֹּעֶה (תָּעָה)	Qal Ptc ms III - He Ptc: R1 holem vowel To wander
וַיִּשְׁאָלֵהוּ (שָׁאַל)	Qal imperfect WC 3ms + 3ms PS To inquire
הָאִישׁ (אִישׁ)	Subject of וַיִּשְׁאָלֵהוּ
לֵאמֹר (אָמַר)	Prep + Qal IC To say
תְּבַקֵּשׁ (בָּקַשׁ)	Piel imperfect 2ms Piel (intensive): dagesh in R2 To seek

16	
וַיֹּ֣אמֶר אֶת־אַחַ֣י אָנֹכִ֣י מְבַקֵּ֑שׁ הַגִּ֥ידָה־נָּ֖א לִ֣י אֵיפֹ֣ה הֵ֔ם רֹעִֽים׃	
And he said, “My brothers I (am) seeking. Please tell me where they (are) pasturing.”	
וַיֹּ֣אמֶר (אָמַר)	Qal imperfect WC 3ms To say
מְבַקֵּ֑שׁ (בָּקַשׁ)	Piel Ptc ms To seek/search
הַגִּ֥ידָה (נָגַד)	Hiphil imperative 2ms Imperative: ה preformative Paragogic He (emphatic) R1 nun assimilated in R2 To tell
אֵיפֹ֣ה (פֹּה + אֵי)	Interrogative particle Compound of where and here *Where*
רֹעִֽים (רָעָה)	Qal Ptc mp To pasture

17	
וַיֹּאמֶר הָאִישׁ נָסְעוּ מִזֶּה כִּי שָׁמַעְתִּי אֹמְרִים נֵלְכָה דֹתָיְנָה וַיֵּלֶךְ יוֹסֵף אַחַר אֶחָיו וַיִּמְצָאֵם בְּדֹתָן׃	
And the man said, “They departed from here Because I heard them saying, ‘Let’s go to Dothan.’” *So* Joseph went after his brothers And he found them in Dothan.	
וַיֹּאמֶר (אָמַר)	Qal imperfect WC 3ms To say
נָסְעוּ (נָסַע)	Qal perfect 3cp To depart/journey/pull up
שָׁמַעְתִּי (שָׁמַע)	Qal perfect 1cs To hear/listen
אֹמְרִים (אָמַר)	Qal Ptc mp
נֵלְכָה (הָלַךְ)	Qal imperfect (cohortative) 1cp To come/go/walk
וַיֵּלֶךְ (הָלַךְ)	Qal imperfect WC 3ms To come/go/walk
וַיִּמְצָאֵם (מָצָא)	Qal imperfect WC 3ms + 3mp PS To find

18	
וַיִּרְאוּ אֹתוֹ מֵרָחֹק וּבְטֶרֶם יִקְרַב אֲלֵיהֶם וַיִּתְנַכְּלוּ אֹתוֹ לַהֲמִיתוֹ׃	
And they saw him from a distance And before he approached them They conspired against him to kill him.	
וַיִּרְאוּ (רָאָה)	Qal imperfect WC 3mp To see
וּבְטֶרֶם (טֶרֶם)	Conj + Prep + Adverb *Before/not yet*
יִקְרַב (קָרַב)	Qal imperfect 3ms To meet/come close/come near/approach/draw near
אֲלֵיהֶם (אֵל)	Prep + 3mp PS
וַיִּתְנַכְּלוּ (נָכַל)	Hithpael imperfect WC 3mp Hithpael: reflexive/reciprocal To conspire
לַהֲמִיתוֹ (מוּת)	Prep + Hiphil IC + 3ms PS Hiphil: causative To kill

19	
וַיֹּאמְרוּ אִישׁ אֶל־אָחִיו הִנֵּה בַּעַל הַחֲלֹמוֹת הַלָּזֶה בָּא׃	
And they said, Each man to his brother, “Behold, this owner of dreams has arrived.”	
וַיֹּאמְרוּ (אָמַר)	Qal imperfect WC 3mp To say
בַּעַל	Noun ms Construct
הַחֲלֹמוֹת	Definite Article + Noun mp absolute
הַלָּזֶה (זֶה)	Demonstrative Pronoun ms *This*
בָּא (בוֹא)	Qal perfect 3ms OR Qal Ptc ms To come Note

20	
וְעַתָּה לְכוּ וְנַהַרְגֵהוּ וְנַשְׁלִכֵהוּ בְּאַחַד הַבֹּרוֹת וְאָמַרְנוּ חַיָּה רָעָה אֲכָלָתְהוּ וְנִרְאֶה מַה־יִּהְיוּ חֲלֹמֹתָיו׃	
“And now, come! And let us kill him And let us cast him in one of the wells. And we will say, ‘A wild beast ate him.’ And we will see what will become of his dreams.”	
לְכוּ (הָלַךְ) NOT הָלְכוּ (Q pf 3cp)	Qal imperative 2mp I - He 2mp: וּ In Qal perfect, the full root would be present To come/go Note 1
וְנַהַרְגֵהוּ (הָרַג)	Qal imperfect (cohortative) Waw Conjunctive 1cp + 3ms PS To kill
וְנַשְׁלִכֵהוּ (שָׁלַךְ) NOT נַשְׁלִךְ (Q impf 1cp)	Hiphil imperfect (cohortative) Waw Conjunctive 1cp + 3ms PS Hiphil (causative): preformative patach, implied hireq-yod b/w R1 and R2 Cohortative: R3 tsere To cast Note 2
בְּאַחַד	Prep + Cardinal number ms Construct
וְאָמַרְנוּ (אָמַר)	Qal perfect Waw Conjunctive 1cp To say
חַיָּה (חַי)	Noun fs *Beast*
רָעָה	Adj fs *Wild/evil*
אֲכָלָתְהוּ (אָכַל)	Qal perfect 3fs + 3ms PS To eat
וְנִרְאֶה (רָאָה)	Qal imperfect Waw Conjunctive 1cp To see
יִּהְיוּ (הָיָה)	Qal imperfect 3mp + 3ms PS

	3mp: shureq To be

21	
וַיִּשְׁמַע רְאוּבֵן וַיַּצִּלֵהוּ מִיָּדָם וַיֹּאמֶר לֹא נַכֶּנּוּ נָפֶשׁ:	
But Ruben heard, And he delivered him from their hand. And he said, “Let us not take his life.”	
וַיִּשְׁמַע (שָׁמַע)	Qal imperfect WC 3ms To hear/listen
רְאוּבֵן	Proper Noun *Reuben*
וַיַּצִּלֵהוּ (נָצַל)	Hiphil imperfect WC 3ms + 3ms PS To deliver
וַיֹּאמֶר (אָמַר)	Qal imperfect WC 3ms
נַכֶּנּוּ (נָכָה)	Hiphil imperfect (cohortative) 1cp + 3ms PS Hiphil: preformative patach R2 dagesh is R1 Nun Nun is 1cp imperfect preformative Dagesh in nun indicates that this is a composite suffix form 3ms PS III - He To take/smite

22

וַיֹּאמֶר אֲלֵהֶם רְאוּבֵן׃
אַל־תִּשְׁפְּכוּ־דָם׃
הַשְׁלִיכוּ אֹתוֹ אֶל־הַבּוֹר הַזֶּה אֲשֶׁר בַּמִּדְבָּר
וְיָד אַל־תִּשְׁלְחוּ־בוֹ
לְמַעַן הַצִּיל אֹתוֹ מִיָּדָם
לַהֲשִׁיבוֹ אֶל־אָבִיו׃

And Reuben said to them,
"You shall not shed blood.
Cast him in this pit that (is) in the wilderness
But do not lay a hand against him."
In order to deliver him from their hand
To return him to his father. <why not their (3mp) father?>

וַיֹּאמֶר (אָמַר)	Qal imperfect WC 3ms To say
אַל־תִּשְׁפְּכוּ (שָׁפַךְ)	Qal imperfect 2mp To shed blood Note 3
הַשְׁלִיכוּ (שָׁלַךְ) NOT הִשְׁלִיכוּ (H pf 3cp)	Hiphil imperative 2mp (Shureq) Hiphil: ה preformative, hireq-yod Imperative: הַ preformative To cast Note 1
וְיָד	Noun ds *Hand*
תִּשְׁלְחוּ (שָׁלַח)	Qal imperfect (jussive) 2mp To lay/send
הַצִּיל (נָצַל)	Hiphil (causative) IC (or imperative 2ms) R1 dagesh in tsade To deliver Note 2
לַהֲשִׁיבוֹ (שׁוּב)	Prep + Hiphil IC + 3ms PS To return

23	
וַיְהִי כַּאֲשֶׁר־בָּא יוֹסֵף אֶל־אֶחָיו וַיַּפְשִׁיטוּ אֶת־יוֹסֵף אֶת־כֻּתָּנְתּוֹ אֶת־כְּתֹנֶת הַפַּסִּים אֲשֶׁר עָלָיו׃	
And it was that just as Joseph went to his brothers, *That* they took off Joseph's coat, the coat of many colours and that (was) upon him.	
וַיְהִי (הָיָה)	Qal imperfect WC 3ms To be
בָּא (בוא)	Qal perfect 3ms To go
וַיַּפְשִׁיטוּ (פָּשַׁט)	Hiphil (causative) imperfect WC 3mp To take off/strip
כֻּתָּנְתּוֹ (כְּתֹנֶת)	Noun fs Construct + 3ms PS *Coat*
הַפַּסִּים (פַּס)	Noun mp Absolute *Many colours*
עָלָיו (עַל)	Prep + 3ms PS

24	
וַיִּקָּחֻהוּ וַיַּשְׁלִכוּ אֹתוֹ הַבֹּרָה וְהַבּוֹר רֵק אֵין בּוֹ מָיִם׃	
And they seized him And they cast him in the pit The pit (was) empty without water in it.	
וַיִּקָּחֻהוּ (לָקַח)	Qal imperfect WC 3mp + 3ms PS To seize
וַיַּשְׁלִכוּ (שָׁלַךְ)	Hiphil imperfect WC 3mp Hiphil: dagesh in preformative is He To cast
הַבֹּרָה (בּוֹר)	Definite articles + Noun ms Absolute + Directional He
רֵק (רֵיק)	Adj ms Absolute *Empty*
בּוֹ	Prep + 3ms PS

NARRATIVE ANALYSIS

The narrator in Genesis 37:13-24 uses Biblical Hebrew grammar and syntax including forms and structures to develop the plot between Joseph and his brothers. The narrator also uses stylistic features in the plot, characterization, and setting, and develops them in the passage. The manuscript traditions used also contain text-critical issues.

In verse 13, לְכָה (*go*) is an imperative interjection and a word of emotion used by Israel to Joseph to excite and encourage him. לֹוא (the negation) is the plene spelling for לֹו.

Verse 14 contains challenging verbs that need to be parsed. In the case of רְאֵה (Qal imperative 2ms), context provides the clue to its imperative form and it is translated *see*. In the case of וַהֲשִׁבֵנִי (Hiphil imperfect (jussive) 2ms), the three consonants left after the Waw Consecutive are הֲשִׁבֵ, however they do not form a verb. The He is dropped as it is the marker for the Hiphil tense, leaving two possible roots: שׁוּב and יׁשב. If the root were יׁשב with a ה preformative, the yod would morph into a shureq to form תּוֹשֵׁב in the Qal imperfect 2ms. Therefore, the root of וַהֲשִׁבֵנִי is שׁוּב (*to return*). שׁוּב is a hollow verb. The Hireq Yod suffix of וַהֲשִׁבֵנִי reduces the vowel under the preformative to hateph pathach. The word also has defective spelling because it omits a vowel letter that could be used to represent one of its vowels, specifically the holam sound. With plene spelling there would be a hireq yod at R1 and not just a hireq. The verb וַהֲשִׁבֵנִי in verse 14 is also an example of a pronominal suffix affixed to a finite verb functioning as the indirect object of the clause, a less common use of the pronominal suffix (*And bring <u>me</u> word again*), also called the "object suffix".

Note as well in verse 14 that וַיִּשְׁלָחֵהוּ (Qal imperfect WC 3ms + 3ms PS) has the same root, form, and components as וְאֶשְׁלָחֲךָ (Qal imperfect WC 1cs + 2ms PS) in verse 13, but a different PGN and suffix. Verse 14's וַיִּשְׁלָחֵהוּ is an example of the syntactic-semantic function of

pronominal suffixes affixed to finite verbs in which the pronominal suffix affixed to the finite verb שָׁלַח functions as the object of the clause (*So he sent <u>him</u>*). וַיִּשְׁלָחֵהוּ is an example of a pronominal suffix affixed to a finite verb functioning as the object of the clause, its most common use.

Verse 15 is an example of the long yiqtol/imperfect form. Verse 15's yiqtol/imperfect is a progressive continuous action in the present tense time frame. וַיִּמְצָאֵהוּ (Qal imperfect WC 3ms + 3ms PS) is a highly inflected verb whose subject is אִישׁ. The subject is not Joseph, because in Hebrew the subject of the wayiqtol verb is immediately after the verb in the Hebrew sentence structure and the suffix of the verb is Joseph. Joseph cannot find himself. Note that after וְהִנֵּה there is no pronominal subject (*him*) but that it is supplied in the translation. אִישׁ is a countable singular whose referent is an individual serving to enumerate one object (*a man*). The subject is often omitted after the demonstrative adverb הִנֵּה which sufficiently shows the subject, according to Jouon and Muraoka[1]. The pronominal subject is often omitted in a nominal clause which formally or virtually contains an answer (in this case, to *he found him*, וַיִּמְצָאֵהוּ), which contains the 3ms pronominal suffix. Because הִנֵּה is an observation, the subject pronoun is omitted in the participial clause (תֹּעֶה). According to Waltke and O'Connor, this is rare[2]. The participle תֹּעֶה is being used as the predicate of a verbless clause and could be translated *and behold, (he was) wandering in the field* rather than the supplied *And beheld him wandering in the field*. תְּבַקֵּשׁ , the final word in the verse, is durative and denotes a durative action which may be termed an actual present, an action that is taking place at the moment of speaking[3]. The action of *seeking* or *looking for* (בָּקַשׁ) is not over or complete.

[1] Jouon and Muraoka, page 510.
[2] Waltke, page 624.
[3] Jouon and Muraoka, page 338.

In verse 16, וַיֹּ֣אמֶר אֶת־אַחַ֔י is not a case of an intransitive verb taking a direct object. Verse 16, like many other verbs in Genesis chapter 37, uses inverted word order for emphasis. אַחַ֔י (*my brothers*), the answer the verse 15 question תְּבַקֵּֽשׁ (*what are you seeking?*), appears at the beginning because it is the essential part of the answer to the question. Emphasis and relative importance causes the fronting of the object (*brothers*). The object (*brothers*) does not follow the verb (בָּקַשׁ), leading to an Object-Subject-Verb (and predicate) order. The participle מְבַקֵּשׁ (*seeking/looking)* is a participial predicate whose complement (*My brothers)* precedes it. The semantic value of the participle מְבַקֵּשׁ is that of continuous action that takes place simultaneously with the present reference time of Joseph's wandering in the field. מְבַקֵּשׁ is a participle in the sphere of the present. In verse 15, the man asks, "*What are you looking for?*, a yiqtol of the present. Joseph replies, אֶת־אַחַ֔י אָנֹכִ֖י מְבַקֵּֽשׁ (*it is my brothers that I am looking for*), a participle in the sphere of the present. The participle is being used predicatively and is a temporal form, a substitute for yiqtol. The participle is the most obvious form for the actual present, indicating an action that is proceeding at the moment of speaking.[4] The interrogative particle אֵיפֹ֖ה is a compound of where (אֵי) and here (פֹּה).

In verse 17, שָׁמַ֣עְתִּי (*I heard*) introduces the participle אֹמְרִ֗ים (*them saying*) which is used as the equivalent of an independent relative clause with the participle occurring as an object. נֵלְכָ֖ה (Qal imperfect 1cp) is in the cohortative direct volative mood which is a modification of the future indicative yiqtol used without a Waw according to Jouon and Muraoka[5]. This cohortative (Latin *cohortor* 'to encourage'[6]) in the first person plural is one in which the brothers seek to instigate or encourage each other to the action of going to Dothan. דֹּתָ֑יְנָה (*Dothan*) contains a directional qamets he ending which is locative in nature. אַחַ֔ר (*after (his brothers)*) was an old

[4] Jouon and Muraoka, pages 380-381.
[5] Jouon and Muraoka, pages 345, 347.
[6] Waltke and O'Connor, page 573.

noun used first as an adverb and subsequently (as here) as a preposition before the noun אֶחָיו (*his brothers*). It originally had a substantive meaning (*the back*) and was used afterwards as an adverb in the sense of *at the back or behind* and in the temporal sense of *then, afterwards*. Finally, here in verse 17, אַחַר is used as a preposition meaning going at the back of his brothers or behind his brothers in a local sense. The preposition, being originally a noun, is considered nomen regens which governs the relationship to the noun אֶחָיו (*his brothers*)[7].

In verse 18, the yiqtol of the conjunction וּבְטֶרֶם יִקְרַב (*before he approached*) is used for a past action (*they conspired against him*). In this case, the non-perfective verb form יִקְרַב has a past time reference after בְּטֶרֶם. The particle טֶרֶם preceded by the preposition בְּ is used in temporal clauses. The stem of וַיִּתְנַכְּלוּ is the Hithpael. It can be recognized in the prefix form by the prefix pronoun followed by the תְ and in every form it has a doubled middle root letter. Like all the derived stems, it can have many shades of meaning. It is often intensive and usually either reflexive or interactive as in *They conspired together*. This reflexive form is transitive. In the case of לַהֲמִיתֻוֹ, the preposition לְ helps with the form. הֲ (He with hateph patach) cannot be an interrogative He because of its position in the word. The clue to its function lies in the pronominal suffix which demands a transitive form of the verb. The לַהֲמִיתֻוֹ contains the 3ms pronominal suffix added to the infinitival form of the verb מוּת and the 3ms pronominal suffix is the object in an infinitive clause (*to kill <u>him</u>*).

In verse 19, וַיֹּאמְרוּ אִישׁ אֶל־אָחִיו is a plural verb, וַיֹּאמְרוּ, taking a singular subject, אִישׁ. However, אִישׁ can imply each man and so the translation reads, "And they said, each man to his brother," which smooths out the English without distorting the meaning of the text. בַּעַל הַחֲלֹמוֹת הַלָּזֶה, הַלָּזֶה is an old form of זֶה according to Kittel. The adjective הַלָּזֶה modifies בַּעַל (*this owner of dreams* rather than *the owner of this dream*) though it lies outside the construct chain because

[7] Jouon and Muraoka, page 309.

nothing should come between the word in construct and the word in the absolute. The genitive phrase בַּעַל הַחֲלֹמוֹת (*owner of dreams*) could be translated *the man with the dreams* or *the dreamer* as בַּעַל expresses the possessor of the quality of owner. הִנֵּה בַּעַל הַחֲלֹמוֹת הַלָּזֶה בָּא is the use of the genitive in conventional idiom consisting of the construct form of בַּעַל. בַּעַל (*owner*) is the construct and הַחֲלֹמוֹת (*of the dreams*) is the genitive and they modify each other, one specifying features of the other. The noun in the genitive case represents Joseph's nature, quality, character and condition[8]. This locution of nouns supplements the meager stock of adjectives in Hebrew. The use of הַלָּזֶה increases the sarcasm of the brothers (*this owner of dreams*). הַלָּזֶה is a demonstrative pronoun and points out or calls attention to Joseph as being a dreamer. It is a singular masculine expanded near or immediate demonstrative that refers to Joseph as being relatively near the brothers.[9] בָּא can be a Qal perfect 3ms ("this owner of dreams has arrived"), or a Qal participle ms ("this owner of dreams is arriving"). It is similar to verse 18's יִקְרַב in which, "he (Joseph) would come to his brothers," and has been translated as a perfect. If translated as a participle, it would act as a description of an ongoing state as in, "this owner of dreams is coming".

The הִנֵּה clause in verse 19 stands before a clause with a volitional form in verse 20. Waltke and O'Connor view verses 19 and 20 as a presentative introducing a longer or a fuller exclamation which serves to ground and define the material that follows[10]. The presentative הִנֵּה serves to introduce the fact that Joseph is an *owner of dreams* (בַּעַל הַחֲלֹמוֹת), a fact upon which the following command (*Let's kill him*) is based.

Verse 20 begins with לְכוּ וְנַהַרְגֻהוּ וְנַשְׁלִכֵהוּ, three verbs in a row, and is common in Hebrew. According to Kittel, this is not the work of poor prose but is instead a stylistic device. לְכוּ in the

[8] Waltke and O'Connor, page 149.
[9] Waltke and O'Connor, page 306.
[10] Waltke and O'Connor, page 676.

plural is a command frequently used in the Old Testament. לְכוּ in the imperative is used to incite and encourage in the interjectional sense of *come on!* – a word of emotion or a cry to commit murder (וְנַהַרְגֵהוּ). וְנַשְׁלִכֵהוּ is translated in an actively causative sense because it is in the Hiphil stem. בְּאַחַד is a substantive use of אֶחָד and involves a construct phrase. The number word אַחַד (*one*) precedes the plural noun הַבֹּרוֹת (*the pits*). The lexical form of הַבֹּרוֹת (well or pit or cistern) can be discerned by uncovering its root letters. The vowel letter holem waw can be dropped as can the definite article. The beit and the resh are root letters, leaving the final taw. While ב ר ת is not a root, וֹת is a feminine plural ending. If we use He as a third root letter, there is a root, but it does not fit the context. The holem on the beit of הַבֹּרוֹת indicates a holem waw which results in בּוֹר (*well* or *pit* or *cistern*). The noun חַיָּה is not the verb חָיָה due to the patach under the first letter. In addition, the Qal perfect 3ms would not have a dagesh forte in the middle root letter. Thus, the root is חַיָּה, not הָיָה, and חַיָּה is a noun meaning *beast*. Regarding the adjective רָעָה, Gen 37:2 has רֹעֶה (Qal Ptc ms of the verb רָעָה) (*feeding* or *pasturing*) and רָעָה (Adj fs) (*evil*), Gen 37:12 has לִרְעוֹת (Qal IC of the verb רָעָה) ("to feed" or "to pasture") and Gen 37:13 has רֹעִים (Qal Ptc mp of the verb רָעָה) ("feeding" or "pasturing"), indicating, in oral recitation, a link between evil and the verb to eat or to pasture due to the common pronunciation of the resh on the first consonant. The beast is pasturing and the beast is evil (or, rather, wild). With the verb אֲכָלָתְהוּ, the root is אָכַל ("to eat") which is Qal perfect 3fs + 3ms PS because of the feminine singular gender and number of the immediately preceding noun (חַיָּה) and adjective (רָעָה) which are the subject of this verb. The Taw in אֲכָלָתְהוּ is a euphonic substitute for the He to render the pronunciation easier. וְנִרְאֶה is a Waw Conjunctive Qal imperfect 1cp, the Nun being the first person plural imperfect prefix, and is not the Niphal stem because of the root רָאָה , a weak III-He verb. The vowel pattern or hireq under the nun, qamets under the resh, and seghol under the aleph is characteristic of the Qal

imperfect for this type of weak verb. This result in an active (*we will see*) rather than a passive or reflexive voice (*we will be seen*). The Niphal imperfect 1cp form would be וְנֵרָאֶה. The subject of יִהְיוּ is מַה and the verb is הָיָה (to be, a weak I-Guttural III-He verb) and the dagesh forte doubling is due to a missing or assimilated sound in the verb's ancient form and the first He is dropped to make the pronunciation easier. Finally, חֲלֹמֹתָיו is a masculine plural construct noun from חָלוֹם with a feminine plural ending (rather than the masculine ending im or hireq yod mem) because in Hebrew, the gender of a noun in the singular does not always match the gender of its plural ending. The indefinite use of מַה (*what*) in verse 20 involves the clausal object מַה־יִּהְיוּ חֲלֹמֹתָיו (*what will become of his dreams*).

In verse 21, it has been proposed that verse 21 read יְהוּדָה (Judah) instead of רְאוּבֵן (Reuben), possibly to harmonize with verse 26 in which Judah says to his brothers, "What profit is it if we kill our brother and conceal his blood?" However, there is no textual support for this emendation. The dagesh forte in וַיַּצִּלֵהוּ is the assimilated Nun in נָצַל. נַכֶּנּוּ is a very difficult verb. The subject is the brothers. The root is נָכָה, a weak I-Nun III-He verb in which R1 drops and is represented in the dagesh in the R2 caf. The nun is the preformative for the imperfect 1cp. לֹא negates the 1cp cohortative and is a timeless prohibition. The suffix נּוּ has a dagesh forte in the nun indicating that this a composite suffix form of the 3ms pronominal suffix and is characteristic of how this suffix attaches to verbs. The Hiphil stem is the standard stem for נָכָה when it means "to smite". While Arnold and Choi translate this section, "We must not strike him to death," they say a literal translation would be, "We must not strike him with respect to his life." נֶפֶשׁ (*life*)'s role is to qualify the direct object which is the suffix of the verb. Jouon and Muraoka believe that נֶפֶשׁ is an accusative of limitation with the transitive verb נָכָה because the part to which the expression נַכֶּנּוּ is to apply is in the accusative. The indirect accusative is

indirectly subordinated to the verb and indicates a determination of the verbal predicate[11]. נֶפֶשׁ is the attribute of a noun and so a literal translation would be *Let us not strike him with respect to his soul*.

In verse 22, אַל־תַּשְׁפְּכוּ, the negative particle אַל precedes the verb and implies a strong negative command in the second person. הַשְׁלִיכוּ is a direct command Hiphil imperative form that is used when instructing multiple people to cast or throw something. The prepositional phrase אֶל־הַבּוֹר הַזֶּה (*into this pit*) is one using the preposition אֶל unlike Gen 37:24 which uses the qamets He or he locale. אֶל indicates a semantic relationship. The nature of the spatial relationship is that the trajector is Joseph and the landmark is *this pit*. The semantic function of the preposition אֶל is due to the verb הַשְׁלִיכוּ that governs the preposition אֶל. וְיָד אַל־תִּשְׁלְחוּ־בּוֹ reverses the word order. Instead of the object, hand (וְיָד), coming after the verb, the object is positioned before the verb. The preposition בּוֹ marks the object of the verb תִּשְׁלְחוּ (*to lay*). The preposition לְמַעַן introduces an infinitive positive purpose clause in which the agent of the verb of the events x referred to in a matrix clause performs an action with the intention to bring about an event y (the deliverance of Joseph) introduced by לְמַעַן. The narrator of Genesis provides the purpose of the speech act referred to in the matrix clause. The matrix comprises more than one sentence (verse 22). לְמַעַן is an important conjunction used to express purpose and it is being used as a preposition with the infinitive in a consecutive relationship that is not being expressed in a light and elegant fashion by a mere Waw, but in a more precise way by means of the conjunction לְמַעַן. הַצִּיל is in the infinitive construct or imperative 2ms tense and is a strong command that is frequently used when pleading with God or commanding someone to intervene and save a person from danger. In אָבִיו, the 3ms pronominal suffix is ironic in that it indicates Reuben intends to return Joseph to

[11] Jouon and Muraoka, page 425-426.

his father, not *their* (הֶם) father. The brothers' intention to kill their father's preferred son Joseph is a form of paternal estrangement or alienation or emancipation.

Verse 23 וַיְהִי כַּאֲשֶׁר has the temporal sense of *And it happened when*. וַיַּפְשִׁיטוּ has three direct objects: Joseph (יוֹסֵף), his coat (כֻּתָּנְתּוֹ), and the coat of many colours (כְּתֹנֶת הַפַּסִּים). It is a crescendo that begins with Joseph and ends with the coat of many colours that had been made for him by his father Israel and that signified that his father loved him more than his brothers. Note that the LXX and the Syriac version omit אֶת־כֻּתָּנְתּוֹ which attenuates the crescendo. A similar crescendo appears in Gen 22:2 where the God tests Abraham and says, "Take (1) your son, (2) your only son Isaac (3) whom you love …" and both passages involve an aborted sacrifice. In Gen 22, Abraham sacrifices Isaac and in Gen 37 Joseph is sacrificed by his brothers. In Gen 22:1, Abraham, the sacrificor, responds to God with הִנֵּנִי (*here I am*), while in Gen 37:13, Joseph, the one who is to be sacrificed, responds to Israel with הִנֵּנִי (*here I am*). The LXX and Syriac's omission of אֶת־כֻּתָּנְתּוֹ could be explained as follows:

- The Septuagint and Syriac translators had a different manuscript and later a Masorete decided to add a poetic notation.
- This is a case of haplography in which a copyist skipped the second DDOM.
- There was a deliberate stylistic choice by the translators to avoid redundancy.
- The translators wanted a more concise translation.

Continuing in verse 23, וַיַּפְשִׁיטוּ אֶת־יוֹסֵף אֶת־כֻּתָּנְתּוֹ represents a double accusative of the affected object in which they take off Joseph and his coat where the second accusative is an accusative in object. It is the construction taken by verbs of wearing and taking off when the meaning is causative[12]. וַיַּפְשִׁיטוּ is causative (the brothers caused Joseph to put off) because roots that are

[12] Jouon and Muraoka, page 423.

transitive in the Qal tend to be causative in the Hiphil[13]. The construction וַיַּפְשִׁיטוּ with three DDOM's is a three-place predicate with a subject and three accusatives, with the person יוֹסֵף (*Joseph*) being the object of the causing and כֻּתָּנְתּוֹ (*his coat*) being the object of the verb פָּשַׁט (*to take off*). The verb of stripping (וַיַּפְשִׁיטוּ) is governing the personal direct object יוֹסֵף (*Joseph*) and the complement object כֻּתָּנְתּוֹ (*coat*). Waltke and O'Connor translate the chain כֻּתָּנְתּוֹ אֶת־כְּתֹנֶת הַפַּסִּים as *his robe, the richly ornamented robe* using an apposition construction because the 3ms pronominal suffix refers to the noun כְּתֹנֶת (*robe*) in a chain that cannot be suffixed.[14] אֲשֶׁר עָלָיו is a noun sentence and so the verb to be (*was*) is supplied in the translation.

Verse 24 begins with the defective spelling of וַיִּקָּחֻהוּ in which the PGN is marked by qibbuts instead of shureq. Verse 24 marks the third time that the verb שָׁלַךְ has appeared in Gen 37. In 37:20 it appears as וְנַשְׁלִכֵהוּ (*let us … throw him into one of the pits*) and in 37:22 it appears as הַשְׁלִיכוּ (*throw him into this pit*) and in verse 24 it appears as וַיַּשְׁלִכוּ (*they cast him in the pit*). הַבֹּרָה contains a directional qamets He, signifying, "And they threw him *into* the pit." The He locale is formed by adding the suffix qamets He to the common noun to indicate the goal of the movement to throw. As in verse 22, the nature of the spatial relationship is that the trajector is Joseph and the landmark is this pit. אֵין is a negative in construct form and appears as a substantive indicating non-existence. אֵין is used as a sentential negative to negate a nominal clause and functions as a negative predicator of existence. It denies the existence of the referent מַיִם (water) of an undetermined subject in a nominal clause. The antecedent of the 3ms PS בּוֹ is pit.

Genesis 37:13-24 is a poignant passage with Biblical Hebrew grammatical issues. The need for a sacrifice of the son (in the case of Genesis 37, Joseph, the beloved son of Israel, and in

[13] Waltke and O'Connor, page 441.
[14] Waltke and O'Connor, 304.

the case of Genesis 22, Isaac, the promised and obedient son of Abraham) is further developed. The sacrificial system will receive further elaboration during the sons of Israel's initiation of the Passover sacrifice, their wandering in the wilderness in Exodus and Leviticus, and receives its culmination in Jesus' sacrifice on the cross in the New Testament.

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